

Somerset County Council.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

DISTRICT. — MINEHEAD.

Population, estimated to middle of 1920, 4,707.

1. STAFF—Particulars of present Sanitary Staff.

Town Surveyor, Mr. Barron. Surveyor's Clerk, Mr. Poole. Assistants, two. Foreman who does disinfections under Surveyor's supervision.

2. GENERAL STATISTICS.

BIRTHS—Number Registered, 97. Number notified under Notification of Births Acts.....

Birth rate, 20'60. Rate of infantile mortality.....

Deaths under 1 year—Under 1 wk., one; 1-4 wks. (inc.),... ..; 1-6 mos.,.....; 6-12 mos., one. Total, two.

Remarks *re* Infant Mortality.—

The infant mortality is practically negligible. Of the two deaths, one occurred as a result of a case of Eclampsia, and the other as the result of infection with Diphtheria.

DEATHS—All registered, 67. Corrected for inward and outward transfers, 60.

Death rate (after correction for transfers), 12'7.

Remarks on causes of death and any increase or decrease in deaths from particular causes.—

The outstanding feature in this connection is the advanced age at which the greater number of deaths took place. Of the 60 registered, 37 occurred above 60 years of age, 25 above 70, and 12 above 80.

3. INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Number of

Infectious Diseases.	Cases Notified.	Deaths.	Removed to Hospital.
Diphtheria	25	2	25
Scarlet Fever	1	nil.	1
Enteric Fever	nil	"	nil.
Puerperal Fever	"	"	"
Dysentery	"	"	"
Malaria	"	"	"
Poliomyelitis	"	"	"
Cerebro—Spinal—Meningitis	"	"	"
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	"	"	"
Acute Primary Pneumonia	"	4	"
Acute Influenzal Pneumonia	"	"	"
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	26	4	"
Other Tuberculosis Varieties	"	1	5
Total	52	11	31

Cases of notified Infectious Diseases not in above list to be set out here.....

Remarks *re* prevalence, distribution, methods adopted for prevention, etc. Any points *re* Isolation Hospital provision.—

With the exception of the continuance of spasmodic cases of Diphtheria the year has been marked by the absence of any important epidemic. The Diphtheria was finally traced to carriers amongst the School Children, and when these were removed the cases ceased.

(Special) Ophthalmia Neonatorum. Details of arrangements made for dealing with these cases including provision of medical and nursing assistance—Nurse provided at expense of Council.

Disinfections after Disease, 29.

Disinfection of Schools, 11.

4.—GENERAL SANITARY ADMINISTRATION.

1. DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.—During the year the Ministry of Health approved of the laying of a New Tank Gravitating Sewer for the drainage of Alcombe, which will abolish some insanitary and overburdened Septic Tanks and Treatment Grounds. The work has been let to contract and is now being carried out, and is contracted to be finished by the middle of June next. The drainage of the houses composing the Woodcombe district requires dealing with in a similar manner, and I am in hopes this will be done next year. The Sewer Outfalls discharge on the beach above high tide level, and require extending to below the water mark to prevent pollution of the foreshore. This is at present under consideration. The Sewers of the district being tidal, further provision for ventilating the same at all their upper extremities requires providing for.

Stopped Drains, 5.

Drains Smoke-tested, 22.

2. RIVER POLLUTION.—The abandonment of the above Septic Tanks will prevent further pollution of the water-courses in the marshes, leaving the Woodcombe stream as the only one in the district being polluted.

3. WATER SUPPLY.—The Water is of good quality, and the question of increasing the supply and storage is at present being considered.

4. SCAVENGING.—Scavenging and Street Sweeping is done by barrow men, each being allotted a district, House Refuse is collected weekly in Winter and bi-weekly in Summer.
5. FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.—The Workshops are kept clean.
5. a. MILK SUPPLY. One sample taken and found good.
- b. Seizure of Food Stuffs, 7.
6. MEAT INSPECTION.
 - (a) Number of Licensed Slaughter Houses—None.
 Number of Registered Slaughter Houses—None.
 One Municipal Abbatoir.
 - (b) Particulars of amount of food condemned, giving grounds of condemnation.—One leg of a bullock, which had been insufficiently cold stored became putrid around the bone.
7. HOUSING (the particulars asked for by the Ministry)
 - Number of Dwelling-houses of all Classes.....
 - Number of Working-class Dwelling-houses.....
 - Number of Working-class Houses erected (i.e.) finished—19.
 - a. By Local Authority under Government Scheme—None.
 - b. By private enterprise (whether subsidised or not).—19.
 - New Houses in hand (January 1st, 1921) but not erected—6.
 - a. Plans passed only.—28.
 - b. Building commenced but not completed.—20 Subsidy Houses.

INSPECTION.

- Total number of Dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)
- Number of Dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations 1910.—17
- Number of Dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation.—None.
- Number of Dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation.—20.

ACTION.

- Number of defective Dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers—21.
- A. *Proceedings under Section 28 of the Housing, Town Planning, etc. Act, 1919.*
- Number of Dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs.—None.
- Number of Dwelling-houses which were rendered fit.—None.
- a. By Owners
 - b. By Local Authority in default of Owners—None.
- Number of Dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by Owners of intentions to close.—None.
- B. *Proceedings under Public Health Acts.*
- Number of Dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied.—20.
- Number of Dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied.
- a. By Owners.—21.
 - b. By Local Authority in default of Owners.—None.
- C. *Proceedings under Sections 17 and 18 of the Housing, Town Planning, etc. Act, 1909.*
- Number of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders.—None.
- Number of Dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made.—None.
- Number of Dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the Dwelling-houses having been rendered fit.—None.
- Number of Dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made.—None.
- Number of Dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders.—None.
- Any unhealthy areas represented.—None.
- General Housing conditions in the district.—Good.
- Overcrowding (extent, causes, measures taken).—One case of overcrowding was dealt with during the year.
- Any other remarks on Housing.—The Council have a Local Housing Scheme for fifty houses. Five acres of land have been purchased for these houses and the tenders obtained for the erection of the first ten houses (five pairs of semi-detached—six non parlour and four parlour type), but the Ministry would not accept the same as the price was considered too high, and at present the Council are inviting fresh tenders for these houses. Whilst on the subject of houses I should like to point out the advisability of a Town Planning Scheme. At the present time there is no regular growth of any particular type of house in any particular locality, and there is no control over the size of house or the number of houses to be built on any particular plot of land. It seems obvious that if every intending builder of a house is at liberty to gratify his own wishes, either in the erection of an edifice for his own occupation or in the building of numbers of houses with the object of making money, there will result a confusion and a medley of houses rather than an ordered and attractive township. It is obvious from the number of plans that have been submitted that building is going to continue and increase, and the time is coming for the Council to make up its mind as to whether Minehead shall grow as an orderly, well-contrived and pleasant seeming entity, or as a series of excrescences beautifying or disfiguring the landscape as individual fancy or the desire for profit may determine.

W. BAIN,

Medical Officer of Health.

April 14th, 1921.

